SWOT Analysis: How Compact Curricular Agenda affects English Teaching and Learning Process

1*Nyak Mutia Ismail, 2Juliana, 3Rusma Setiyana, 4Hayatul Muna

1Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Syiah Kuala, Darussalam, Banda Aceh 23111, Indonesia;
2Nurse Academy of Kesdam Iskandar Muda, Banda Aceh 23121, Indonesia;
3Teuku Umar University, Meulaboh, 23651, Indonesia;
4STAIN Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, 24351, Indonesia;

*Corresponding Author: nyakmutiaismail2010@gmail.com

Abstract

A successful process of English teaching and learning has been considered as an ultimately major goal in Indonesian high-schools, including in integrated Islamic high-schools known with doubled-curriculum schools. To mention further, this agenda tightens students’ academic activities as other subjects also bring about numerous high standard motives and goals. This study was conducted to analyze the effect of this compact curricular agenda towards the process of English Teaching and learning from the teacher’s perspectives. The curricular agenda at SMP IT Az-Zahra Takengon was SWOT-analyzed regarding its effect to the process of English teaching and learning at the school. In significance, this study is expected to broaden the knowledge of stakeholders of high-school curriculum management in developing the curricular academic activities in more deliberately careful ways in the purpose of reaching the goal protocols. The method used in this study was mainly qualitative approach through interviews which solely sheds light on the description of the academic agenda in the congruence of English teaching and learning process through interviews with the English teacher at the school. The result showed that the strength is that it has risen the students’ motivation whether in learning English or other subjects since the school provides various curricular activities, instead of monotonous ones, that loosen the students’ boredom and tension. The weakness is that full academic agenda leads to the condition where lots of English lessons are leftuntaught from which we eventually see that it are a management failure. The opportunity from the agenda is that the students are exposed to multi-disciplinary material abundance. Finally, the thread is that realizing the students with low motivation in English would seemingly remove English into their blacklists as a result of exhaustion.

Key words: SWOT analysis, curricular agenda, English teaching and learning.

Introduction

Recently, most schools have complied with the condition where the students should have a lot of academic activities, especially those schools with favorite-in-town predicate and private schools in order to achieve better students’ achievement and higher-order thinking ability. Specifically speaking, private schools—including Integrated-Islamic schools—carry out double curriculum, from which the authors derived the definition for compact curriculum. It is run under the circumstances of both national curriculum and institution curriculum called Integrated-Islamic curriculum as it is one of the policy of Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu (JSIT) or Integrated-Islamic School Network (Zahri, 2013).

SMPIT AzZahra Takengon is one of the schools that implement both 2013 National Curriculum and Integrated-Islamic curriculum for it is one of the schools under the JSIT network. Integrated-Islamic curriculum expands in term of teaching Islamic-characterized lessons such as Tahfiz and Tahsin Quran (Quran memorization and re-learning), Hadits memorization, leadership and social trainings, Islamic-character building classes, and outings. Besides coping with national curriculum which includes English lesson, the students also have to be able to memorize Quran and hadits. This condition provides heavier activities for students and the authors wonder whether it is manageable for them. This is in line with Zahri’s (2013) perception that the society see that JSIT schools have definite propensities in concentrating toward cognitive ability alone and induce the students to be burdensome. And burdens lead to stress. Further, Chen et al. (2014) add that academic burnout can also result from the unwell-being feeling and lack of competencies in any sorts of learning environment.
Concerning the analysis tool, SWOT Analysis, which is a straightforward framework that majorly done in evaluating an ongoing program in attempt to set a meaningful change and improvements (Orr, 2013), was used. According to Orr (2013), the Strength reveals out what the institution has successfully done; the Weakness refers to the desired improvements by the institution; Opportunity is the advantage that the institution could earn; and Threat focuses on the things that come as obstacles for the institution in running its program. Strength and Weakness are internally resourced, while Opportunity and Threat are rather external.

In the objective of this study, this compact curriculum application was analyzed using the SWOT-Analysis framework for which it examines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities gained by the students, and threats faced by the students all the way through toward the English learning at SMPIT AzZahra, Takengon. While in significance, this study is expected to broaden the knowledge of stakeholders of high-school curriculum management in developing the curricular academic activities in more deliberately careful ways in the purpose of reaching the goal protocols.

Research Method
The instrument used in this study was dominantly interviews. The interview with an English teacher at SMPIT AzZahra Takengon was arranged and she answered 7 questions concerning the curricular activities at the school. Ever since this school has just run its premiere year, so there is only one English teacher who handles only the 40 single-grade students who are divided into two classes, just to mention. The questions were formulated by the authors based on the SWOT principles in accordance with the curricular activities. The interview questions are as follows:
1. As an English teacher, do you agree with a school when it runs compact curriculum?
2. What are the merits for English teachers in a compact-curriculum school in concern to English teaching-learning process?
3. What are the drawbacks for teachers in a compact-curriculum school in concern to English teaching-learning process?
4. What opportunities can the students gain in a compact-curriculum school in concern to English teaching-learning process?
5. What is major risk for the students in a compact-curriculum school in concern to English teaching-learning process?
6. Are there students complaining the tight academic agenda affecting their English learning?
7. Do you on your own complain the tight academic agenda that affect your English teaching activity?

The process carried out in the researching process is as elaborated in the following. The authors came upon the English teacher to interview her concerning the curricular agenda at the school. The information from the teacher was written. After the interview, the teacher also related her experience and her viewpoints to the implementation of compact curriculum with its compact agenda as well. After the process settled, the authors thanked the teachers for the information she had shared. The data analysis was done through the three-step analysis including data reduction, data display, and data verification as suggested by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013).

Results and Discussion
In this section, the result of this study which stems into four components are explicated. The first component is the strength of the curricular agenda toward the English teaching and learning (ELT) process; the second one is its weakness; the third and fourth are the external factors that predispose the ELT process in term of opportunity gained and threat confronted, respectively.

The foremost to mention is the strength. As pinned in the earliest section, the JSIT curriculum includes Tahfiz and Tahsin Quran (Quran memorization and re-learning), Hadits memorization, Islamic-characterized leadership and social trainings, Islamic-character building classes, and outings to its instructional agenda. From the interview of question 1 and question 2, it was obtained that these additional lessons have emboldened the students’ motivation whether in ELT or other subjects. The teacher noted that the students are very much delighted with assortedly additional activities they encounter at school especially the outing classes or better known as vocational classes. All teachers are obliged to take the students on a vacation class outside the school, to a recreational place in where they would learn about Islamic essence in accordance with nature (Tafakkur). Verily, the teacher regularly turned this activity into an English conversation class and the students have to express their amazement in English. In another occasion, the teacher also happened to tell the students several new words and expressions whilst they are doing the Tafakkur. The teacher noticed that during this sort of activity, their motivation in learning English elevates. The most probable reasoning for this is that in the
recreational area—outside the classroom, the students have less to worry about and feel more loose and open. Shia (2008) clarifies that this is seen as an intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is when the students find a need to mastery orientation and work-avoidant orientation. In mastery orientation, the students render their motivation to task rather than to learning, however this leads to learning process though. Concerning to work-avoidance, the students do not have anything to accomplished through writing activity, which indeed they repel. Further, it also relates to extrinsic motivation where the students are motivated by power motivation, which is a desire to prove themselves to others and a feeling as a competent learner, with neither the feeling of rigor nor reluctance. In addition, based on the Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis, the language learner are easily learning and acquiring the language when their affective filter is low, and this promotes higher motivation afterward (Ellis, 1985).

Second, it is the weakness on the compact curriculum implementation toward the ELT process. From the answer for question 3, question 6, and question 7, the authors were informed that tight activities lead to the condition where quite a few of English lessons are left untaught. Since the teacher has to focus on many agenda, as all agenda are priority at the school. She has to teach Tahfiz and Tahsin as well, which means she has to memorize Quran for herself in advance. Besides, she is in charged to take the students to a recreational place once a month and still needs to arrange for the fun and appealing teaching scenario. Since interesting environmental learning created from interesting scenario would boost up students’ motivation and promote the students’ intrinsic motivation in language learning (Othman & Shuqair, 2013). This situation sometimes leads to a stressful situation or even burnouts. Administrative workload, along with academic workload, work environment, promotion and evaluation, and research funding, is a factor that can cause burnouts both in teachers and academes (Karabiyik, Eker & Anbar, 2008). In addition, Lou and Chen (2016) notify that burnout in English teachers is majorly caused by workload and teaching courses, students, management, teacher development procedures, and family.

Third, the component to be explained in this section is opportunity of compact curriculum implementation toward the ELT process. In answering question 4, the teacher clarified that the students can learn more abundance of materials from various activities. For example, when they do the Tafakkur, they could learn English lexis and expressions about nature and its conformation with Islamic tenets. Besides, when they are in leadership class or character building class, they also learn ample amount of vocabulary pertaining leadership and character building. The words and expressions are seemingly to be useful for them in the actual English classes. Likewise, Krashen’s Input Hypothesis favors this condition where it states that the comprehensible input is likely to be acquired in a real situation without force and correction. It supplies the students not to learn immediately, but to learn when they are ready (Ellis, 1985).

The latest is the threat. The teacher reported, in order to meet the answer for question 5, that the students are lethargic to activity that involves writing in the English class, including grammar where the students’ ability in grammar is rather feeble. Nonetheless, they are prone to oral activities as mentioned earlier. Naturally, activities in English class that involve productive skills is more difficult than that of receptive. However, from the factual condition we learn that both writing and oral skills are productive skills. The authors are convinced that this situation happens because writing are more strenous that in speaking since in speaking, the students can freely express their ideas and correct them as soon as the mistake is made and it never needs hectic editings and revisions. On the contrary, writing demands a very well-furnished text where the students have to invent ideas, contrast, concede, and wrap them into a desired forms of genre types thorough text interpretation and reflection (Hayes, 2003). This is in relation with work-avoidance motivation as the students are already replete with curricular agenda, so they avoid tied-up tasks. Still, there is no bond between their burnouts and English lesson mastery. This assumption is supported in a study by Palabiyik (2014) whose result states that there is no empirical correlation between academic burnouts and proficiency level.

The result of the SWOT Analysis on the implementation of compact curriculum toward the ELT process is intertwined in the following table.

### Table 1. SWOT Analysis Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>SWOT Principles</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strength (Internal)</td>
<td>Various curricular activities elevate motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Weakness (Internal)</td>
<td>The teacher stumbles into deficient time to finish teaching all of the English lessons (chapters).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Opportunity (External)  Students learn more of English words, phrases, and expressions from plentiful and heterogeneous materials.

4 Threat (External)  Students are too weary and they might develop the possibility to resent English.

In addition to the result drawn in the table above, the teacher also informed that the students’ stress and joy come across the balance since the school does not offer dormitory life. So after a day full of tiring activities, they have chance to go back home and meet their family, and this is where the exhaustion is healed.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the SWOT Analysis result has shown that the society’s supposition that compact-curriculum schools are burdensome for most students is somewhat hypothetical. It depends from which point of view it is outlooked. It does not serve the drawbacks alone, but there are feasible potentials offered by such plenary curriculum instructions.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to deliver their thanks to SMPIT Az-Zahra, Takengon as well as to the English teacher who had willingly shared her points of view and experiences that became the most crucial parts of this study.

References


